

CHAPTER XIX

HILL 10 AND CHOCOLATE HILL

(Map 3; Sketches A, 23, 24)

7 Aug. Six battalions of the 10th (Irish) Division steamed into Suvla Bay at daybreak on the 7th August to be thrown straight into the fight.¹ These troops had been living on board ship since the 11th July, and throughout that period, except for a few route marches in Mitylene, their only chance of exercise had been deck-parades and sports. Owing to the excess of secrecy already noticed, not even their commander (Br.-General F. F. Hill) had been given any information about the operations in front of him; and when he arrived in the bay, and was greeted with shrapnel fire, he was as ignorant of what was happening, or what he was expected to do, as his most junior subaltern. Half an hour after his arrival, a steamboat came alongside to take him to the corps commander.

Overnight General Stopford had intended to land the whole of the 10th Division² at A Beach, to complete the capture of the Kiretch Tepe ridge. But, from what Commander Unwin had told him at daybreak, a landing at A seemed out of the question, and no other suitable beach had yet been found inside the bay. He now ordered Hill, therefore, to take his six battalions to C Beach, and place himself under General Hammersley's orders till the arrival of his own divisional commander. If Hammersley could not be found, Hill was to support the 11th Division troops near Hill 10, and also to complete the capture of the Kiretch Tepe ridge. Stopford explained that the main task of the corps was to secure Suvla Bay as a base of operations, and that this

¹ The 31st Brigade complete, with the 6/ and 7/R. Dublin Fusiliers (30th Brigade) attached. See Order of Battle at end of Volume.

² Lieut.-General Mahon, commanding the division, was also due at daybreak from Mudros with the rest of the 30th Brigade (Br.-General L. L. Nicol), the 5. Royal Irish (Pioneers) and three field companies R.E. These troops, with Hill's six battalions, constituted his whole command, as the 25th Brigade was at Anzac and his divisional artillery in Egypt.

could only be accomplished by holding the Tekke Tepe ridge 7 Aug. from Ejelmer Bay to Anafarta Sagir.¹

Hill returned to his fleet-sweeper; but, before his troops had begun to disembark, Commodore Keyes, Admiral de Robeck's Chief of Staff, arrived on board the *Jonquil* with the news that a landing-place had been found on the northern arm of the bay. He suggested that Hill's troops should be landed there. As Stopford wanted to use these troops on the northern flank, it is plain that this would have been the better plan. But General Stopford and Admiral Christian replied that Hill had been given his orders, and that to change them now would lead to delay and confusion.

Soon after this decision had been reached, Major F. G. Fuller of the corps staff, who had gone ashore at daybreak to discover the situation, returned to the *Jonquil* with such news as Hammersley had been able to give him at 6 A.M. Hammersley had added that he would send Hill's troops along the Kiretch Tepe ridge, and would like them landed inside the bay in order to save the long march from C. By this time Hill and his leading troops had already started for C Beach in a lighter. But General Mahon had meanwhile arrived from Mudros with three battalions and three field companies, and at 7.30 A.M. he was ordered to land with these troops on the northern arm of the bay. He was told that Hill's six battalions were landing at C, and had been placed temporarily under Hammersley's orders; that they were going to be employed on the left flank; and that they would revert to Mahon as soon as he got ashore. Pending their return, Mahon was to send Br.-General Nicol with the two remaining battalions of the 30th Brigade along the Kiretch Tepe ridge. On reaching the line held by the 11th Manchester, Nicol should take that battalion under his orders and press on with all three battalions in the direction of Ejelmer Bay.

A copy of these instructions was sent off to 11th Division headquarters. But the message did not arrive till after midday; and long before that hour General Hammersley had changed his plans, and Br.-General Hill had been ordered to the extreme right, with five of his six battalions, to capture the Chocolate Hills. Owing to some accurate shelling of C Beach, Hill's sixth battalion (5/R. Inniskilling Fusiliers) had been deflected from that beach, and eventually disembarked with Nicol's brigade on the northern side of the bay. But the five which had landed at C did not rejoin their division for several days. Thus, at the

¹ These orders were put into writing before Hill left the *Jonquil* shortly after 6 A.M. See Appendix 10.

7 Aug. very outset of the Suvla operations, the organization of the 10th Division was completely disrupted, and the only portions of the division at General Mahon's disposal were two battalions of the 30th Brigade, one of the 31st, the divisional pioneers, and three field companies.

Here it should also be noticed that at an early hour on the 7th August the disadvantages of General Stopford's position on board ship had already begun to declare themselves.¹ It is easy to see now that he would have been better advised to land at once and establish his headquarters ashore. But he judged at the time that he would be even less able ashore than afloat to exercise any command: he would be cut off from Admiral Christian, and, until the arrival of the corps signal company, would be unable to keep in touch with the troops on both sides of the bay.

Br.-General Haggard, who moved forward from Lala Baba about 5.30 A.M. on the 7th with the remaining two battalions of the 32nd Brigade, reached the Cut about 6 A.M. Here he found a disorganized crowd of men of all battalions, while the 5/Dorset and the 8/Northumberland Fusiliers were lined out along the coast, facing east, to the north of it. The Turkish rifle fire was negligible, but a battery of field guns, whose shrapnel was fortunately bursting very high, was dividing its attention between the beach and the shipping in the bay. Hill 10 had at last been located, and appeared to be held by about a hundred Turks.²

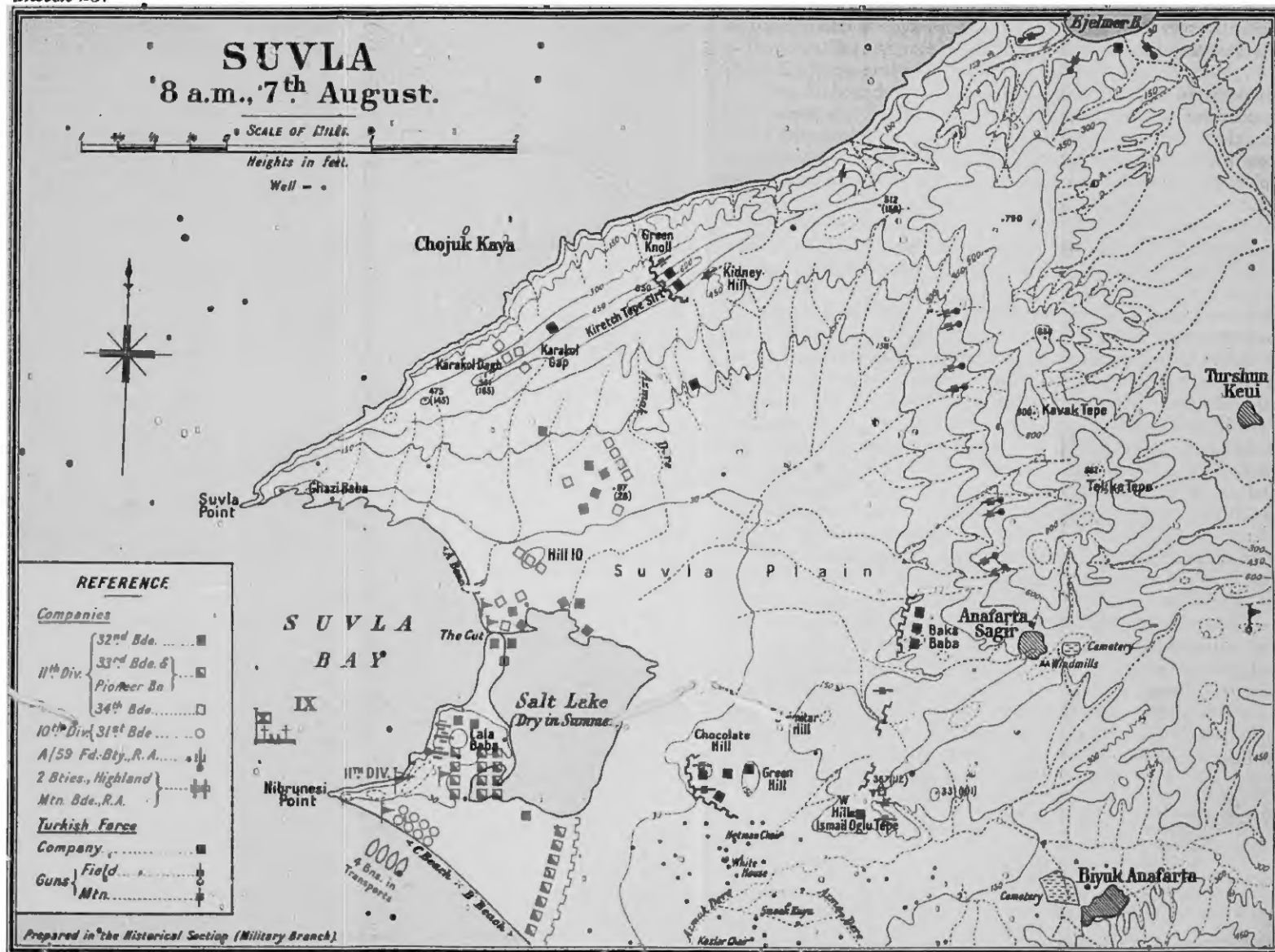
Soon after Haggard's arrival a converging attack was made on this post with the equivalent of two and a half battalions. Vastly outnumbered, and with their line of retreat threatened, the Turks abandoned their trenches and streamed away north-east.

The moment was now ripe for getting units together and attacking the Chocolate Hills. But by this time the original orders for the landing would seem to have been forgotten. The 5/Dorset pressed forward in a north-easterly direction towards the scrub-covered slopes of the Kiretch Tepe ridge, and was followed by the bulk of the 9/West Yorkshire and by scattered parties of most of the other battalions.³

¹ See page 233. The naval shore signal station was not working till some time after daybreak. At 5.45 A.M. Admiral de Robeck, arriving at Suvla, signalled to the *Talbot*: "Do you know what the situation is?" *Talbot* replied: "No. There is no signal communication with the shore at all."

² This surmise was correct. The rest of the *Broussa Gendarmerie* had retired soon after daybreak. At 6 A.M. an observer on Lala Baba saw "about five hundred Turks retiring towards Anafarta", but this report only reached divisional headquarters at 8.45 A.M.

³ Three companies of the Northumberland Fusiliers which General Sitwell had held back from the attack were now sent forward to Hill 10.



Arrived at a point on rising ground¹ about sixteen hundred 7 Aug. yards from the beach, where the scrub was very thick, Colonel Hannay halted the 5/Dorset and sent out scouts to his front. Reporting to General Sitwell, he wrote that the opposition was slight, and asked for further orders.

It was now about 8 A.M. The 32nd and 34th Brigades were very intermixed, but it would have been easy to sort them out and make a fresh advance. The troops themselves, though very tired, were fully capable of an immediate effort. Most of the units had suffered very few casualties,² and to Colonel Hannay it was plain that immediate action was essential if the race against time was to be won. But nothing could be accomplished without resolute leadership.

When Hannay's message reached General Sitwell, the 32nd and 34th Brigade headquarters were established close together. Br.-General Haggard had been placed under Sitwell's orders, and was waiting for a lead from him. General Sitwell deemed it imperative to adopt a defensive attitude. The news which had reached him a little earlier—that six battalions of the 10th Division were moving up to support him—had not altered this view. His plan was that Colonel Hannay should seize a small spur immediately in front of Point 28 and join hands with the 11/Manchester on the top of the ridge; and that the rest of the force, including Hill's battalions, should dig in on a line between Point 28 and the Cut. This proposal he forwarded to divisional headquarters at 8.40 A.M. in a message reporting the capture of Hill 10.

Previous to the arrival of General Sitwell's message at 9.20 A.M., General Hammersley had received no news from either of his attacking brigades since half past five, and his knowledge of the situation in front was confined to reports of observers on the top of Lala Baba. Before the message arrived, however, three orders had been issued by divisional headquarters, each one cancelling its predecessor. At 8 A.M., on hearing that Hill 10 was apparently captured, General Hammersley issued a definite order, numbered G.98, that on the arrival of the 31st Brigade, the 32nd and 34th were "to push on vigorously to Yilghin Burnu [the Chocolate Hills]". The 31st Brigade (Hill's command) was to protect their left flank by advancing south-east from Hill 10

¹ Point 28. See Sketch 23.

² The 9/Lancashire Fusiliers and 6/Yorkshire had suffered heavily, and the 9/West Yorkshire had lost several officers since daylight.

7 Aug. with the right of its line directed on Ismail Oglu Tepe (the W Hills).¹

This was in effect an invitation to further delay. Sitwell's and Haggard's brigades were "to push on vigorously", but they were not to start till Hill's brigade had arrived. And Hill's troops had only just begun to land, and could not be ready to carry out their part of the task for at least another three hours.

Soon after the issue of this order, however, observers on Lala Baba reported that the 34th Brigade and a large part of the 32nd had apparently advanced north-east from Hill 10. About the same time a Turkish shell burst within a few yards of General Hammersley, killing Major H. L. Nevill of the divisional staff and two orderlies, and wounding an A.D.C. General Hammersley, who was in a bad state of health, was naturally much shaken.

A few minutes later, presumably as a result of the report from Lala Baba, a second order, cancelling the one issued at 8 A.M., was issued from divisional headquarters. It was not addressed to Sitwell, but only to Haggard and Hill:

8.35 A.M. Reiterate my G.98, reserve troops 32nd Brigade and 31st Brigade will push vigorously on to Yilghin Burnu and Ismail Oglu Tepe. Understand situation has changed since my G.98. What news have you of 34th Brigade?

N. MALCOLM, Lt.-Col. G.S.

This new order gave little indication of the respective objectives of the two brigades which were to carry out the attack. Taken literally, it apparently meant that the 32nd Brigade was to attack the Chocolate Hills and the 31st Brigade the W Hills. But either this was not the divisional commander's intention or he changed his mind as soon as the order was issued.

At this moment, about a quarter to nine, Br.-General Hill reported at divisional headquarters, and showed General Hammersley the order given him by the corps. Hammersley told him that, as soon as his troops were concentrated, he was to move them forward to the north of the Cut, get into touch

¹ It has already been noticed (see page 129) that the alternative names by which these neighbouring hills were known caused serious misunderstandings on 7th Aug. When the term "Yilghin Burnu and Ismail Oglu Tepe" was, quite correctly, used in orders to express "Chocolate Hill, Green Hill" and the W Hills, many officers, who saw the hills for the first time that day, took Yilghin Burnu to refer to Chocolate Hill and Ismail Oglu Tepe to Green Hill, immediately to the east of it. This was undoubtedly the reason why, later in the day, some of the troops ordered to advance on Ismail Oglu Tepe ignored the W Hills altogether.

with Haggard, and attack the Chocolate Hills. His left flank 7 Aug. would be protected by the 32nd Brigade, which would be advancing simultaneously against the W Hills.

Br.-General Hill pointed out with some reason that if sent to the extreme right he would be completely separated from the rest of the 10th Division. It was explained to him, however, that there was no alternative, and he then hurried back to the beach to do what he could to accelerate the disembarkation.

A third order, either in amplification or substitution of the one despatched at 8.35 A.M., was now sent off by the division to General Haggard:

9.5 A.M. 31st Brigade with six battalions has been ordered to advance to Yilghin Burnu. Your reserve should move on outer flank 31st Brigade against Ismail Oglu Tepe. Watch your left flank towards Anafarta.

J. DUNCAN, Major, G.S.

This order did not agree with the verbal instructions just issued to Hill. General Hill had been given to understand that the whole of the 32nd Brigade would be moving on his outer flank against the W Hills (Ismail Oglu Tepe). General Haggard had been told merely to employ his "reserve", whatever that might be; and herein lay the germ of another regrettable delay.

In the forward zone, meanwhile, the earlier changes in the 11th Division orders were already causing trouble. The eight o'clock order reached General Sitwell at 8.45 A.M., and seems to have given him the lead he badly needed. At once he wrote to Colonel Hannay:

8.55 A.M. 31st Brigade of six battalions now on the way to Hill 10. On its arrival 32nd and 34th Bdes. will move on Yilghin Burnu. 31st Bde. proceeding with right on Ismail Oglu Tepe protecting the left of 32nd and 34th Brigades from direction of Baba. Northumberland Fusiliers will attack Yilghin Burnu supported by Lancashire Fusiliers and 32nd Brigade. You will cover north flank of advance.

These instructions unfortunately were not allowed to stand. Not long after their despatch the two subsequent orders, sent off at 8.35 A.M. and 9.5 A.M. respectively, reached Haggard in quick succession, and were shown by him to Sitwell. Sitwell was senior brigadier, but his own brigade had been allotted no task in either message. The result was unfortunate. He cancelled his own orders and took no further action.

7 Aug. Haggard was now in a quandary. At 9.45 A.M. he reported to General Hammersley that he personally had only the numerical equivalent of one battalion available to attack the Chocolate Hills, and that he was moreover under the orders of Br.-General Sitwell.

The Anzac corps had run a telephone wire along the beach from Anzac Cove to 11th Division headquarters at daybreak, and at half past ten a message of first class importance reached Hammersley from General Birdwood. A number of wagons and a Turkish battery were retiring eastwards from Anafarta Sagir. The enemy was already preparing to evacuate the Suvla plain!

At this point in the story, before describing the advance on Chocolate Hill, another report must be noticed, which reached General Hammersley at 7 A.M. It came from the two battalions of the 33rd Brigade which had entrenched a line from the south-east corner of the Salt Lake overnight,¹ and it stated that their daybreak patrols had located "a strong force of Turks" on Chocolate Hill. Many officers of these two battalions were chafing for orders to attack the hill from the south-west, and there can now be no doubt that such an attack would have been the simplest solution of General Hammersley's problem. Chocolate Hill and Green Hill would have been an easy target for the ships' guns, as well as for the three batteries by that time in position on Lala Baba; and now that five of Hill's six battalions had landed, the whole of the 33rd Brigade could well have been spared for the operation.

But the earlier information from G.H.Q.—the definite but unfortunate warning that the Chocolate Hills position was strongly wired on its south-western face²—had made an indelible impression. Not unnaturally, no one at divisional headquarters questioned the wisdom of adhering to the original plan to avoid the uncut wire.

By 10.30 A.M. Br.-General Hill had issued orders to his three leading battalions³ for their attack on Chocolate Hill and Green Hill, and he then pushed ahead to confer with Haggard with regard to the co-operation of the 32nd Brigade. Hill had

¹ These battalions were directly under the orders of divisional headquarters.

² Actually the position was only protected by a few strands of old rusty wire, which did not form a serious obstacle. Elsewhere at Suvla there was no wire at all.

³ The 6/R. Inniskilling Fusiliers and 5/R. Irish Fusiliers of the 31st Brigade, and the 7/R. Dublin Fusiliers of the 30th Brigade.

ordered his own battalions to cross the Cut, skirt the northern 7 Aug. edge of the lake, and then deploy for attack. The 32nd Brigade, he had added, would be marching simultaneously on the W Hills, and would protect their left flank.

On Hill's arrival at 32nd Brigade headquarters, Haggard explained that he was under Sitwell's orders and could not move without his sanction. Hill next addressed himself to Sitwell; but Sitwell urged that the written orders which he had seen did not agree with the verbal orders given to Hill, and that, in any case, as his (Sitwell's) own brigade was engaged with the Turks beyond Hill 10, he could not for the moment spare any of Haggard's men for a further operation. He was responsible, he said, for the adequate protection of the beach.

General Hill now had to choose between carrying out his own part of the attack single-handed, or referring the matter to General Hammersley. A reference to divisional headquarters would entail a long delay, for there was as yet no telephone communication. But Hill considered it the only wise alternative. General Hammersley had told him that the Chocolate and W Hills were to be attacked simultaneously, and in these circumstances it appeared that an attack on each group of hills in turn might lead to defeat in detail. He consequently decided to return to the division, and he started plodding back through the heavy sand. On the way he met his three leading battalions just moving off, and told them to halt and await further orders. It was now close on midday, and the heat of the sun was intense.

On arrival at divisional headquarters General Hill was told that his reading of the orders was correct, and that the divisional commander had just gone to the top of Lala Baba to watch the progress of the attack. Retracing his steps he toiled up the hill, and there he was told by General Hammersley that Lieut.-Colonel N. Malcolm, his senior staff officer, who had gone forward to 34th Brigade headquarters, would explain everything to Sitwell, and that the advance on the Chocolate Hills and W Hills should be set in motion at once.

Colonel Malcolm reached Sitwell's headquarters about midday, and there he found a sorry situation. There was a certain amount of shell fire, and Br.-General Haggard was seriously wounded soon after Malcolm arrived. A large crowd of men near the Cut, who had been standing about in the open since daylight, were to some extent demoralized, but had suffered few casualties. Sitwell urged very many excuses for not moving, such as the great heat, want of water, and heavy

7 Aug. losses, and repeated that he had no troops to spare for offensive action.

While he and Malcolm were still arguing, a young officer of the 34th Brigade came up to report that he had been out on reconnaissance for a long way due east and was convinced that there were very few Turks. "The proof is", he said, "that I have been out for nearly three hours. I took thirty men with me, and I've brought them all back."

At this moment Hill's three battalions came marching along the spit towards the Cut, and a battery of Turkish guns opened on them with shrapnel. A number of casualties were suffered, but the bearing of the troops was excellent. As soon as they had swung round the northern edge of the lake, Malcolm started back for divisional headquarters. His last words to Sitwell were: "You cannot stay here and refuse to support that advance".

About half past two, Br.-General Hill, who had established his headquarters near the Cut, received a message from his leading troops. The news was none too good. The troops were deployed along a line running from the north-east corner of the Salt Lake. The 6/R. Inniskilling Fusiliers (Lieut.-Colonel H. M. Cliff) was on the right, the 7/R. Dublin Fusiliers (Lieut.-Colonel G. Downing) in the centre, and the 5/R. Irish Fusiliers (Major F. W. E. Johnson) on the left. No units of the 32nd Brigade had yet arrived to protect their left flank, and the Irish Fusiliers were being harassed by rifle fire from the direction of Baka Baba¹ and shrapnel fire from the Tekke Tepe ridge.

Hill now hurried off to Sitwell and implored him to order some of his troops to march on the W Hills. The result of his visit is shown by his message to the division, despatched at 3 P.M.:

Have just seen Br.-General Sitwell. No battalions of 32nd or 14th Bde. are operating on my left flank. Sitwell tells me he will send two battalions forward. There is a good deal of opposition on my left flank. Am sending 6/R. Irish Fusiliers to strengthen my line, and have one battalion in reserve.

This message arrived at 3.30 P.M. But by that time the divisional commander, as a result of Colonel Malcolm's visit, had again changed his plan, and new orders were on the way to brigades. Hill's attack was to be suspended, and a new attack, with many more troops and a smaller objective, was to be launched at half past five.

¹ This fire must have come from men of the *Broussa Gendarmerie*, who had retired in that direction at daylight.



CHOCOLATE HILL, THE SALT LAKE AND, ON THE RIGHT, LALA BABA, FROM SCIMITAR HILL

While walking back from Sitwell's headquarters, Colonel 7 Aug. Malcolm had come to the conclusion that the attack as ordered would never be carried through. He therefore persuaded the divisional commander to add to the attacking force the two battalions of the 33rd Brigade¹ in divisional reserve, and to order a general assault, on the Chocolate Hills alone, to be launched at 5.30 P.M., supported by the one field and two mountain batteries already ashore and by all the naval guns that could be brought to bear. At 2.40 P.M., therefore, a new order, involving a third change in the divisional plan since 8 A.M., was issued to all brigades:

G.123. The advance will be suspended for the present. It will be resumed at 5.30 P.M. 33rd Bde. (less 2 battalions) will leave its present position and move with its right north of the Salt Lake, so as to come on the right of the 31st Brigade, general direction Yilghin Burnu [the Chocolate Hills]. This advance will be supported by all troops of 32nd and 34th Brigades which have not suffered heavy casualties. General Sitwell to command attack. 31st, 32nd and 34th² Brigades will report to General Sitwell for orders. Artillery has been ordered to cover attack beginning at 5.15 P.M.

J. DUNCAN, Major G.S.

It will be seen from this order that the idea of a simultaneous advance on the W Hills had now been dropped, and that Hammersley had entrusted this new attack, which was to be carried out by all the available troops under his command, to the leadership of Br.-General Sitwell.

Whatever may be thought of this last-minute change of plan, there can be no doubt that, as things worked out, the decision to employ the two battalions of the 33rd Brigade was wise. Unlike the units of the 10th Division, Br.-General Maxwell's battalions had been ashore for over a fortnight, including ten days' experience of active service conditions at Helles. This seasoning now stood them in good stead, and the only pity is that the decision to use them in the attack on the Chocolate Hills was not arrived at earlier.

The order to suspend the attack reached Hill at 3.10 P.M. He and Sitwell both agreed, however, that it would be dangerous, and in fact impossible, to stop an attack which, so far as they knew, was beginning to close with the enemy. So this part of the order was ignored, and the troops in front were not informed of the change in the divisional plan.

¹ The 6/Lincolnshire (Lt.-Colonel M. P. Phelps) and 6/Border Regiment (Lt.-Colonel G. F. Broadrick).

² Evidently a mistake for 33rd.

7 Aug. This disregard of orders, however, made no perceptible difference, for the advance of Hill's battalions had been definitely checked by fire from the front and flanks. On the right the 6/Inniskilling Fusiliers was still held up on the northern edge of the Salt Lake. The 7/R. Dublin Fusiliers was some little way ahead, and the 5/R. Irish Fusiliers, slightly behind on the left, was still being harassed by shrapnel and by the aggressive tactics of skirmishers on its left flank. It had suffered a number of casualties, and was unaware of the enemy's numbers and dispositions. About five o'clock two companies of the Inniskillings began to advance across the north-east corner of the lake by alternate rushes, and the 7/R. Dublin Fusiliers and 5/Irish Fusiliers also made some progress; but at a quarter past five, when the British guns began to open fire, they were still half a mile from their objective.

Br.-General Maxwell's two battalions—6/Lincolnshire and 6/Border Regiment—started off as soon as they received their orders. They were told to skirt the Salt Lake and attack Chocolate Hill on the right of the Irish troops. But they, too, were a long way behind the divisional time-table, and it was nearly half past six when, to save time, they started advancing straight across the lake—the Lincolnshire in front and The Border Regiment in support.

The troops of the 32nd and 34th Brigades, who were originally to have attacked the W Hills, were even further behind. About 3 P.M. General Sitwell detailed the 8/Northumberland Fusiliers of his own brigade and the 8/West Riding and the 6/York & Lancaster of the 32nd Brigade for this part of the operation; and a company of the 5/Dorset, separated from its own unit, seems to have joined in without orders. But it took a long time to collect all the troops; and the new orders of the division, which now called upon them only to support the attack on the Chocolate Hills, had probably added to the confusion.¹

Daylight was already fading when the attack began to develop. The ships² had long ago ceased firing. But the guns on Lala Baba had reopened on Chocolate Hill, and, under cover of this fire, a number of the Irish troops had reached the foot of the hills. Here their advance had again been checked. But soon after seven o'clock the fire of the

¹ Since the wounding of Br.-General Haggard the 32nd Brigade staff were getting orders direct from General Sitwell. Colonel Minogue, who had succeeded to the command of the 32nd Brigade, was still with a portion of the 9/West Yorkshire near Point 23.

² The cruisers *Theseus* and *Grafton* south of Nibrunesi Point, and the *Talbot* in Suvla Bay.

defenders slackened, and the impetus so long required was 7 Aug. now supplied by the arrival of the 6/Lincolnshire. Surging forward in short rushes, this battalion, supported by The Border Regiment, assaulted the western end of Chocolate Hill. The leading troops of the Irish battalions, simultaneously attacked the eastern half and also Green Hill, and, just as darkness set in, the whole position was at last in British hands. The majority of the Turkish garrison made good their retreat to the W Hills, but a small rear guard fought stubbornly to the end.

For a long time, with five battalions intermixed on the slopes of the twin hills, there was a great deal of confusion, and this was increased by the darkness.¹ Though the fighting had now died down, no scouts were sent out, and touch with the enemy was lost.²

The rest of the night was passed in absolute tranquillity, and units were gradually reorganized. After midnight Br.-General Hill arrived to superintend the consolidation of the position, and the two battalions of the 33rd Brigade were ordered by him to withdraw to the foot of the hills. The battalions of the 32nd and 34th Brigades had not been seriously engaged,³ and about midnight were recalled by Sitwell to the beach. No definite report of the capture of the hill reached divisional headquarters till 1 A.M., and the fact that Green Hill had also been taken was not made clear till seven hours later.

On the extreme left of the Suvla front progress on the 7th August was even less satisfactory than on the right. The trouble began with very serious delays in landing the troops which arrived with General Mahon from Mudros. General

¹ The Final Report of the Dardanelles Commission, commenting on the situation at Chocolate Hill, states:

"None of the three brigadier-generals concerned in the attack on Chocolate Hill—Generals Sitwell, Hill and Maxwell—accompanied the troops. They established their report centres about two miles distant from Chocolate Hill, and remained there. In the absence of superior military control and guidance on the spot, a force of inexperienced troops unacquainted with local conditions, and consisting of a number of battalions drawn from five brigades . . . must have been lacking in cohesion and co-operation, and the evidence discloses the confusion and delay which resulted from this cause."

² The casualties in this attack were heavy, and were evenly shared by all the battalions engaged. Hill's four battalions lost 20 officers and about 400 men in all. The two battalions of the 33rd Brigade lost a total of 7 officers and 226 men. The strength of the enemy on the Chocolate Hills at no time exceeded 500 rifles, but some of the British casualties were caused by artillery fire.

³ Lieut.-Colonel C. E. Fishbourne and one other officer of the 8/Northumberland Fusiliers had been wounded.

7 Aug. Mahon, it will be remembered, was told at 7.30 A.M. that they would be landed at once on the northern side of the bay. Soon after 8 A.M. lighters went alongside the fleet-sweepers to take the men ashore, but half an hour later a message came from the corps that no troops were to land till the receipt of "special orders". The men were thereupon re-embarked on the sweepers, and the lighters went away. After a long interval they reappeared, and this time Br.-General Nicol and his brigade headquarters landed. But on the other fleet-sweepers, in the absence of the "special orders" referred to, the commanding officers refused to land their men; and it was not till 11 A.M., when Commodore Keyes went alongside and told them that their brigadier was ashore, that they at last agreed to move.

It was half past eleven before Nicol's first battalion—the 6/Royal Munster Fusiliers—began to disembark. Further delay was then caused by the explosion of some small land mines on the beach. Several of these contrivances, which produced an explosion like a bomb from a small trench-mortar, had been laid by the Turks, and after about six casualties had occurred, the next battalion to land—the 7/Royal Munster Fusiliers—was sent to another small cove a little further to the west. Here it began to disembark without mishap about one o'clock. But the progress of the landing continued to be painfully slow. The 5/Royal Irish was not ashore till late in the afternoon, and, though one company of the 5/R. Inniskilling Fusiliers, which had been diverted from C Beach in the morning, eventually reached the shore at 4 P.M., and two more about six o'clock, the fourth company did not land till the following day.

Br.-General Nicol's two battalions of Royal Munster Fusiliers moved off from the beach about 2.30 P.M. But, in accordance with the orders issued to their brigadier by General Mahon, the only task allotted to these troops was to move along the Kiretch Tepe ridge in support of the 11/Manchester, which would come under General Nicol's orders as soon as the Irish troops came up into line.

At this hour the sun was at its hottest; but no opposition was encountered, and it was not until the troops approached the line held by the 11/Manchester that they began to suffer casualties. As no definite objective had been allotted, no attempt was made to push on beyond this point. The advance came to an end with nothing accomplished, and a line was taken up about 800 yards west of the Turkish strong-point on the summit of the ridge. Touch with the 5/Dorset on the right flank was not obtained. Soon after 9 P.M. the 5/R. Innis-

killing Fusiliers (less one company) was sent forward to relieve 7 Aug. the 11/Manchester, and the latter battalion, which had lost 15 officers and nearly 200 men since it landed, was brought back to the beach.

It will be seen, therefore, that throughout the first 24 hours at Suvla, the only progress made by the IX Corps had been the capture of the Turkish outposts on the two horns of the bay, and the two strong-points on Hill 10 and the Chocolate Hills. On the Kiretch Tepe ridge the line had not been advanced beyond the position reached by the 11/Manchester, and here the enemy's strong-point had not been definitely located. All the encircling hills, which it had been hoped to reach by dawn on the 7th, were still in Turkish possession; and 24 of the 36 hours which the Turks probably needed to bring their reserves from Bulair had already slipped away. More than half of General Stopford's force of 22 battalions had not yet been seriously engaged with the enemy.

Nevertheless the losses of the IX Corps in their first 24 hours ashore had amounted roughly to 100 officers and 1,600 men, or rather more than the total strength of the Turks arrayed against them. These figures, which included a high proportion of battalion commanders and other senior officers, suffice to show the skill of the Turkish riflemen, for the defending force had no machine guns or quick-firing artillery, and most of Major Willmer's guns had been sent away at noon to avoid the apparently imminent risk of capture. The number of casualties further tends to show that the invading troops had lost rather than gained by the hesitation which paralysed their action. Sitting about near the open beach, or advancing slowly in the full light of day, they had offered an unrivalled target to the Turkish snipers. Throughout the day the British troops had scarcely used their rifles; the guns ashore had done little firing; and the naval guns, according to German reports, had done no damage at all.

It was not, however, the military plans alone that collapsed at Suvla on the 7th August. A failure just as complete attended the naval plans for the landing of guns and ammunition, water and supplies, and transport animals and carts. This failure inevitably reacted on and delayed the advance of the army. No guns whatever were landed that day, and of the 960 mules which it was expected to put ashore before nightfall,¹ only 50 were landed at Suvla and 100 sent in lighters from Suvla to Anzac.

Many causes contributed to this naval failure. Partly it

¹ 564 for Suvla, 396 for Anzac.

7 Aug. was due to the stranding of the lighters of the 34th Brigade, to the consequent slow progress of the troops overnight, and the consequent shelling of the beaches and bay at daybreak. Partly it was due to sending lighters back to C Beach to disembark Hill's troops, to the slowness of Mahon's disembarkation, and the protracted detention of lighters for that task. Other causes were the difficulty of manœuvring lighters in and out of the rocky coves on the northern side of the bay, and the long delay in erecting jetties and piers.¹ During the afternoon, too, a sudden thunderstorm churned up the water of the bay for two hours, and at the height of the storm a lighter, full of mules, was swamped.

These and other unexpected events can all be claimed as contributory causes of delay. To some extent Rear-Admiral Christian's task was made more difficult by the necessity of altering the prearranged scheme to suit the needs of the moment. But it is doubtful if he himself realized the overwhelming necessity for speed in completing the disembarkation, or the tremendous issues which depended on his own personal exertions throughout the 7th August. Particularly serious was the failure to land any guns in the course of that day. The paucity of guns ashore, coupled with a desire to rest his troops, was General Stopford's main reason for further delay on the 8th.

A partial failure of the plans for the landing of sea-borne water and sending it forward to the troops led to much suffering at Suvla, but had a less important effect on the course of the operations. In accordance with the original plan, the water-tank ship *Krini* reached Suvla at daybreak on the 7th with two lighters in tow. But both these lighters grounded a long way out, and it was late in the afternoon before any water could be landed inside the bay. Two wells were found on the northern beach; but near the Cut there were none, and here the shortage was very acutely felt. In addition to manœuvring resting troops, there were large numbers of leaderless men in this neighbourhood. Water was their great need; many of them, having long since emptied their bottles, were nearly mad with thirst, and

¹ The Chief Engineer of the corps, who had landed with the 11th Division, was originally told that the material for erecting piers would be landed at A Beach. Subsequently it was decided to land it on the northern arm of the bay; but the Chief Engineer, being out of touch with corps headquarters, was not told of this; and he and a field company, specially detailed to erect the piers, waited in vain all day on the 7th for the material to arrive at A. The Chief Engineer was a sick man before leaving Imbros, and his health broke down on the 9th.

There was no delay with the work carried out by the Australian Bridging Train, which landed with its own stores.



A TURKISH FOUNTAIN ON KIRETCI TEPE RIDGE

here for some time in the afternoon of the 7th there was much confusion and disorder.

Elsewhere the shortage of water was less acute. On the Kiretch Tepe ridge a certain amount was landed in boats from the destroyer on the northern flank.¹ Near Lala Baba there were several wells, and at B and C Beaches there was from the first an abundance of sea-borne water. Owing to the delay in landing mules and water-receptacles, it was only possible to send small quantities of this water to the troops in the front line; but the discovery of a good well to the north of Chocolate Hill relieved the situation in that neighbourhood on the night of the 7th August.

Throughout the 7th August General Headquarters exercised no influence over the course of the Suvla operations, and their inactivity on this day, which, in the light of after events, may be regarded as one of the crises of the World War, can only be explained as the result of over-confidence. Early in the morning the continued absence of news from General Stopford provoked for a time a certain vague uneasiness, but this was dissipated by reassuring reports from other sources. At 8 A.M. Admiral de Robeck signalled that the landing had been a complete surprise. Turkish prisoners, he reported, were stating that no fresh troops had reached the area lately, and that the Turkish force at Suvla consisted of only four battalions.² The 11th Division reported direct to G.H.Q. that the landing at B had been most successful, and that, although General Sitwell's landing had been "much hampered by a "muddy foreshore", both the 34th and 32nd Brigades were now pushing inland. No allusion was made in this report to British losses or Turkish opposition. From Anzac the news arrived that "almost complete tranquillity" was reigning over Suvla, and that Turkish guns were retiring through Anafarta Sagir. Ships returning to Imbros reported that Suvla Bay was full of shipping, and that troops and stores were landing in accordance with the plan.

In the face of these reports, the first message from Stopford,³ received about midday, was astounding. It gave the position of his troops at 7.30 A.M., showing that even Hill 10 had not been captured at that hour; and it ended with the phrase: "As

¹ Though the troops were unaware of it throughout the campaign, there was a magnificent spring of water a few hundred yards in rear of the Turkish position they were attacking on this ridge.

² Actually, as we now know, it consisted only of three.

³ Appendix II.

7 Aug. "you see, we have been able to advance little beyond the edge "of the beach". Looking at it in retrospect, it is perhaps difficult to understand why, upon receipt of this message, which disclosed the slow progress of the IX Corps, Sir Ian Hamilton did not at once proceed to Suvla. Had he done so, and insisted upon an immediate advance, the duration of the World War might have been very considerably shortened.

But on the 7th August 1915 no one at G.H.Q. dreamed of trouble at Suvla, and it seemed essential that the Commander-in-Chief should remain for the present at Imbros, where alone he could keep in touch with the situation at all three points of attack. It was plain that General Stopford's message had been delayed in transmission. It seemed equally plain that the situation had greatly improved since the early morning, and even though a later message from the 11th Division had now reported "fairly heavy casualties in the 32nd and 34th Brigades", there was still no news of serious opposition. Before the landing General Stopford's one fear had been that the Turks were in great strength and heavily entrenched. These forebodings had proved groundless, and now that the 10th Division had apparently landed safely, no one anticipated that the IX Corps would experience any further trouble in pushing forward to its objectives. This confidence was increased by a message from the 11th Division that the opposition on its front was weakening.

During the afternoon, in the absence of any further news from General Stopford, Sir Ian Hamilton would appear for the second time to have had an uneasy suspicion that time was being wasted, for at 4.20 P.M. his Chief of Staff telegraphed to the IX Corps:

Have only received one telegram from you. Chief glad to hear enemy opposition weakening, and knows you will take advantage of this to push on rapidly. Prisoners state landing a surprise, so take every advantage before you are forestalled.

But if the mildness of this first application of the spur can be taken as the measure of his uneasiness, it would seem that the Commander-in-Chief was still convinced that there was no real cause for anxiety.

By 6 P.M. on the 7th it had been arranged that General Birdwood's corps should renew its attack at daybreak next morning. It was hoped at G.H.Q. that by that hour both the Anafarta villages would be in General Stopford's hands, and preparations were now completed for assisting the further advance. The 1,800 first reinforcements for the 11th Division

were sent across from Imbros to Suvla, and two brigades of the 7 Aug. 53rd Division were ordered up from Mudros to be thrown into the fight wherever their presence was needed.

Turning now to the Turkish side, we have already seen that during the night of the 6th/7th August Liman von Sanders had hesitated to denude the Bulair isthmus of troops, and had merely ordered Feizi Bey to despatch three battalions to Major Willmer's aid.

At 5.30 A.M. on the 7th—by which hour nine more British battalions had arrived in Suvla Bay to reinforce the thirteen already ashore—these three Turkish battalions were just starting off on their long march from Bulair. The road was a rough track, and there was little chance that they could come into action for another 30 hours.

By 7 A.M. Liman von Sanders had made up his mind that Sir Ian Hamilton was throwing his whole weight into the scale at Suvla and Anzac, and that his immediate object was the capture of Hill 971 and Chunuk Bair. Thereupon he ordered Feizi Bey to leave only one division at Bulair and to march south with the 7th and 12th Divisions. He also ordered a second division to be sent north from Helles, and every available man from the Asiatic shore.

If the British advance from Suvla and Anzac could be delayed for 48 or even 36 hours, these arrangements might suffice to avert the threatened danger. But was it possible for Major Willmer, with only three battalions, to stem the Suvla tide? In an effort to give him some earlier help, three cavalry squadrons patrolling the coast north of Ejelmer were now ordered to Anafarta, and the admiral at Chanak was begged to despatch a detachment of naval machine guns.

Motoring from Gallipoli town, Feizi Bey reached *Fifth Army* headquarters on the afternoon of the 7th. Liman's news—mostly inaccurate—told him that some of the troops from Suvla, pushing south-east towards the Sari Bair ridge, had reached Damakjelic Bair.¹ Others had penetrated the Suvla plain, and by this time were probably in possession of Anafarta Sagir, or even Turshun Keui. Feizi Bey was to concentrate his two divisions near Selvili,² with outposts in touch with the enemy. He was to attack the invaders next morning and endeavour to turn their left flank. Major Willmer's troops would come under his orders to co-operate in this attack.

Major Willmer had spent the greater part of the 7th August

¹ These troops, as we know, belonged to General Birdwood's forces.

² Five miles east of Turshun Keui.

7 Aug. on the Chocolate and W Hills. From him we learn that his earlier anxiety had been relieved to some extent by the hesitation of the invading troops, the greater part of whom were still apparently halted near the beach. He had seen the advance of two or three battalions from the Cut early in the afternoon. Heading eastward, they moved "bolt upright, as if on parade". They did not extend, and "made no use of the available cover". On reaching the north-east corner of the lake they suffered a number of casualties and their advance came to an end.

Believing that the British would try to push south-east through Anafarta Sagir, Willmer decided that the W Hills and the Anafarta spur must be held at all costs. Every available man would be needed for that task, and none could be spared for holding the Chocolate Hills. The British were probably only awaiting the fall of darkness before making a converging attack on that position from the north and south-west. About 6 P.M., therefore, Willmer ordered the commander of the Chocolate Hills battalion¹ not to await this onslaught, but to retire "in good time" to a new position on the Anafarta spur.

At 7 P.M. Major Willmer reported to *Fifth Army* headquarters:

The landing of hostile forces has continued all day. Estimate their present strength as at least 1½ divisions. No energetic attacks on the enemy's part have taken place. On the contrary, the enemy is advancing timidly. His skirmishers were fired on by our artillery with good effect.

Hill 10 had to be evacuated in the face of superior forces. Kiretch Tepe and Mestan Tepe [Chocolate Hill] still in our hands. Am expecting a powerful attack against the latter to-night.

Hostile artillery fire till now only from men-of-war. Our artillery has suffered no damage.

4th Cavalry Regiment arrived at Schamlitekke, 2 miles south-east of Anafarta Sagir, at 5 P.M., and has been brought up to the Anafarta spur as dismounted riflemen.² Machine-gun detachment from the fleet has not arrived.³

Will hold Ismail Tepe [W Hills] position under all circumstances. Beg you to hasten arrival of XVI Corps.

At midnight on the 7th/8th the commander of the *1/31st Regiment* reported to Willmer that he had withdrawn from the Chocolate Hills with very few casualties, and had reached the W Hills.

¹ The *1/31st Regiment*.

² About 200 men, armed with cavalry carbines.

³ This detachment—4 machine guns—reached Anafarta just before day-break on the 8th.

SUVLA
1 a.m., 8th August.

SCALE OF MILES.

Heights³ in feet.

Well —



REFERENCE.

Battalions

11th Division..... ☐ ☐

10th Division.....

Bde., H.Q. 34TH

A/59 Fd. Bty. R.A., ...

2 Bys., Highland }

Mtn. Bde., R.A.

Turkish Force

Company.....■

Battalion.....

Field.....

Mtn.

Prepared in the Historical Section (Military branch)

Ordinance Survey 1930.

At 1 A.M. on the 8th, therefore, the Turkish dispositions in 8 Aug. the Suvla area were as follows:

On the Kiretch Tepe ridge the three companies of *Gallipoli Gendarmerie* were still holding on to their strong-point and had suffered few losses. Southwards from that point to the neighbourhood of Baka Baba the Suvla plain, as also the Tekke Tepe ridge to the east of it, was bare of Turkish troops. From south of Baka Baba to the W Hills, Willmer's main line of defence, on a frontage of roughly 3,000 yards, was held by about 1,100 men¹ and five mountain guns. The two batteries which during the morning of the 7th were in action on the forward slopes of the Tekke Tepe ridge had retired at midday to its eastern side. The three battalions which had started first from Bulair—very weary after their forced march in the intense heat—had passed through Selvili, and were bivouacking about two miles east of Turshun Keui; but the rest of Feizi Bey's corps was still far in rear.

It will be seen, therefore, that at dawn on the 8th August the door to victory was still ajar for the IX Corps to enter. The initial surprise had been so complete that, despite the long delays, the prize could still be won. Victory was still beckoning. But no more time could be wasted. By the morning of the 9th at the latest the door would be bolted and barred.

<i>Broussa Gendarmerie</i>	.	.	.	.	.	300 men.
<i>1/31st Regiment</i>	.	.	.	.	.	450 "
<i>Dismounted cavalry</i>	.	.	.	.	.	250 "
<i>Pioneer company</i>	.	.	.	.	.	100 "